

7 April 2003
Application No.09/935,156
Docket: 1027co

c.) Remarks

Claims 1-8, 10-11, and 14-31 are pending in this application. Claims 9, 12, and 13 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 22, and 29 have been amended in various particulars.

Turning to the prior art rejections, the independent claims were generally amended to include a coating over the optical component that is used to attach the optical component to the optical bench, the coating being plated on the optical component. Thus, the anticipation rejections are avoided.

Remaining rejections were based on 35 U.S.C. 103, and specifically unpatentability over the Do patent in view of the Hargreaves patent, the Hargreaves patent alone, and the Collins patent in view of the Hargreaves patent. These rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

The present invention is directed to the problem of providing alignment marks for optical components, when the optical components are coated, or plated, to facilitate their attachment to an optical bench.

It is recognized that in this situation, alignment features with reentrant sidewalls facilitate the identification of the features with vision systems, for example, even after plating.

None of the applied references either recognizes this problem or suggests similarly coated, plated alignment features.

The Hargreaves patent mentions plating in column 5, line 37, *et seq.* Here, however, plating is described as a technique for fabricating the supports 42. In contradistinction, the present claimed invention is directed to an alignment feature for positioning the optical component relative to the optical bench, not a fiber on a support as described in the Hargreaves patent. Moreover, the Hargreaves patent fails to show or suggest reentrant alignment features as claimed.

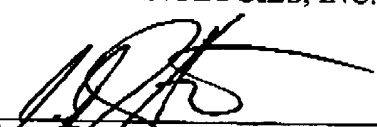
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For the foregoing reasons, the present claimed invention is distinguishable over the applied references. Withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited. Should any questions arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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